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SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER SHINZO ABE'S BILATERAL MEETINGS ON
G-8 MARGINS

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, a.i., Joe Donovan. Reasons
1.4 b/d

11. (C) SUMMARY: Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's bilateral meetings on the margins of the G-8 Summit were successful in building support for Japan's bid to obtain a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, according to MOFA sources. Abe also agreed to work together with the EU and other G-8 countries in tackling climate change through development of a post-Kyoto Protocol framework. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met bilaterally with other G-8 and EU leaders on the margins of the June 6-8 G-8 Summit. Principle topics included bilateral relations, UNSC reform and Japan's bid for a permanent UNSC seat, climate change, China and the EU arms embargo, the Middle East, and North Korea, although time did not allow all topics to be covered in all meetings. This message reports on Abe's discussions with Germany Chancellor Merkel, French President Sarkozy and EU leaders.

Meeting with Chancellor Merkel

13. (C) Bilateral Relations: Prime Minister Abe's June 5 meeting with Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel went very well, and PM Abe believed he succeeded in achieving his objectives, MOFA Central and South Eastern Europe Division Deputy Director Tatsuya Machida told Embassy Tokyo Political Officer on June 11. During their brief meeting, Abe and Merkel discussed Japan's partnership with Germany in the 2008 Hanover Messe technological exposition and the Chancellor's plans to visit Japan this fall.

14. (C) U.N. Security Council Reform: Japan's bid to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council was a major subject in Prime Minister Abe's meetings with Chancellor Merkel, since Japan and Germany, along with India and Brazil, comprise the "G-4" countries who have been working together in a joint effort to secure permanent UNSC membership. The Chancellor initiated the conversation and suggested both countries take a more active role in UNSC reform efforts. The meeting reconfirmed Japan and Germany's commitment to pursue a joint approach within the G-4 context.

15. (C) China: Chancellor Merkel asked Prime Minister Abe how he sees future relations between China and Japan. The Prime Minister replied that relations are currently better than before, but that China should conduct its defense spending

and economic development assistance in a more transparent manner. Chancellor Merkel also asked if Prime Minister Abe thought China will join the G-8 in the near future. Abe replied that it was too early.

¶16. (C) Afghanistan and Lebanon: Chancellor Merkel raised with PM Abe the possibility of Japan and Germany working together to promote capacity building in Afghanistan and Lebanon. She expressed concern about the reconstruction and recovery of these countries and said she would like to engage Japan in future development projects in the region.

Meeting with President Sarkozy

¶17. (C) Bilateral Relations: Prime Minister Abe met with French President Nicolas Sarkozy June 6. Abe's objective was to strengthen Japan-France relations through discussions on UN Security Council reform, climate change and the arms embargo to China, according to MOFA Western Europe Division Deputy Director Jun Imanishi. Prime Minister Abe invited President Sarkozy to visit Japan this fiscal year to celebrate the 150th anniversary of active political and cultural ties between France and Japan.

¶18. (C) U.N. Security Council Reform: The Japanese were satisfied with the outcome of Abe's discussion with President Sarkozy concerning reform of the UN Security Council. Prime Minister Abe reviewed Japan's desire to become a permanent UNSC member and requested France's continued support. President Sarkozy expressed his support of Japan's desire to join the Security Council and indicated there would be no change from France's position on this under former President Chirac.

¶19. (C) North Korea: On the topic of Japan's security concerns about North Korea, Prime Minister Abe explained to President Sarkozy Japan's position on North Korea's nuclear program and the abduction issue. Abe requested the backing of France on these positions and Sarkozy was generally supportive.

¶110. (C) Climate Change: Sarkozy stated he supports PM Abe's "Cool 50" initiative and said that both countries should continue to work together to create an effective and workable framework to deal with climate change.

¶111. (C) China Arms Embargo: Prime Minister Abe expressed concern to President Sarkozy over China's growing defense budget. Japan views this as a potential security threat and is worried about the possibilities of the EU lifting its arms embargo. France, however, has historically been in support of removing restrictions against the sale of arms to China, Imanishi observed. While France has differing views on this issue with Japan, Imanishi surmised that the EU's strict rules concerning the sale of arms to China are unlikely to be eliminated in the near future. Abe explained to Sarkozy that Japan wishes China to be a "responsible" power and to take a strong regional role commensurate with the level of its economic development.

Meeting with the EU

¶112. (C) The issue of climate change was the main focus of PM Abe's meeting June 5 with EU leaders German Chancellor Angela Merkel (Germany currently holds the EU Presidency) and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso in Berlin prior to the G-8 Summit. MOFA Principal Deputy Director of the European Affairs Bureau Dr. Akima Umezawa told political officer that the major outcome of the meeting was commitment by both the EU and Japan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by half by the year 2050. While the EU has traditionally taken a hard line approach to tackling climate change, Japan's position has been more "middle ground" and designed to encourage the participation of other large emitting countries such as the United States, India and China. Japan

and the EU have agreed to attack the climate change issue on a global level and will work together to create a post-Kyoto Protocol framework that ensures the involvement of all major greenhouse gas emitting countries.

¶13. (C) Prime Minister Abe explained to EU leaders Japan's standpoint on issues concerning North Korea. The EU reassured Abe that the EU fully understands Japan's position and supports it.

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